

product liability law. It took the European community about 6 years to accomplish this goal and create the European Product Liability Directive. Japan enacted its first product liability reform law almost 2 years ago. Our Nation, this Congress, and this administration should pull together and meet the challenge of our foreign competitors and enact fair and balanced product liability law.

EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

Mr. BURNS. Mr. President, I rise to add my name to the list of cosponsors of S. 1133, the Parent and Student Savings Account PLUS Act, introduced by Senator COVERDELL, and ask unanimous consent that my name be added. This bill will allow families to invest in education savings accounts, or A-Plus accounts, for their kids' K through 12 expenses.

Mr. President, the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 provides several education-related tax provisions for students and their families. Yet these provisions are mainly aimed at making higher education more affordable. While I am all for student loan interest deductions and tax credits for 2- and 4-year degrees, K through 12 education is not cheap either, and families could greatly benefit by saving up through A-Plus accounts. But for a last minute veto threat of the entire balanced budget act, families would have the option of savings accounts for their kids' future.

Why are education savings accounts a good idea? For the same reason tax credits for college expenses are a good idea: They help families afford a quality education for their kids. These A-Plus accounts can be used for public, private, and home schooling education expenses. Qualified expenses include tuition, fees, tutoring, special needs services, books, supplies, equipment, and transportation. This will mean a lot to hard-working families trying to make ends meet.

Opponents like to equate education savings accounts with vouchers, and they consistently use the terms interchangeably as if they are one and the same. This is a red herring. Unlike vouchers, education savings accounts would not redirect State or local funds otherwise available for public education. To the contrary, I believe public school students will greatly benefit by saving money for general school expenses. And from what I'm hearing, families across the country agree with me. Let me reiterate: We are talking here about using one's own hard-earned money for education expenses, not diverting public funds that would otherwise be spent on public schools.

Now, I do not support the use of vouchers in Montana because I believe they would disrupt public school financing and the costs to our public schools would outweigh the benefits to our students. But this is a separate issue, and one better left to the Montana Legislature.

Opponents have also claimed that education savings accounts would violate the establishment clause of the Constitution because Federal dollars would indirectly benefit religious schools. I'll simply respond by saying that under that reasoning, any federal financial aid to students attending Marquette, Georgetown, or Brigham Young would also violate the Constitution. We all know that is not the case.

Although we were blocked from including education savings accounts in the Taxpayer Relief Act, thanks to the efforts of Senator COVERDELL we will have another chance to send this bill to the President. At that time we will have the chance to show our support for America's families by making education more affordable.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

A message from the House of Representatives, delivered by one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

H.R. 2266. An act making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. MURKOWSKI, from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources:

Report to accompany the bill (S. 1015) to provide for the exchange of lands within Admiralty Island National Monument, and for other purposes (Rept. 105-90).

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. BURNS:

S. 1223. A bill to protect personal employment information reported to the National Directory of New Hires; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ALLARD (for himself and Mr. WYDEN):

S. 1224. A bill to amend the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and

Liability Act of 1980 to ensure full Federal compliance with that Act; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. HUTCHINSON:

S. 1225. A bill to terminate the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. ABRAHAM (for himself, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. KYL, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. NICKLES, and Mr. GRAMM):

S. 1226. A bill to dismantle the Department of Commerce; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

By Mr. JEFFORDS (for himself, Mr. D'AMATO, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. DODD, Mr. BOND, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. BINGAMAN):

S. 1227. A bill to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to clarify treatment of investment managers under such title; considered and passed.

By Mr. CHAFEE (for himself and Mr. D'AMATO):

S. 1228. A bill to provide for a 10-year circulating commemorative coin program to commemorate each of the 50 States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. CAMPBELL:

S. 1229. A bill to provide for the conduct of a clinical trial concerning digital mammography; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

By Mr. CRAIG:

S. 1230. A bill to amend the Small Reclamation Projects of 1956 to provide for Federal cooperation in non-Federal reclamation projects and for participation by non-Federal agencies in Federal projects; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. FRIST (for himself, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. HOLLINGS, and Mr. ROCKEFELLER):

S. 1231. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 for the United States Fire Administration, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. MOYNIHAN:

S. 1232. A bill to provide for the declassification of the journal kept by Glenn T. Seaborg while serving as Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. THURMOND (for himself, Mr. HATCH, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. KYL, Mr. SESSIONS, and Mr. DeWINE):

S. Res. 128. A resolution expressing the sense of the Senate that sections 3345 through 3349 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the "Vacancies Act"), relating to the appointment of certain officers to fill vacant positions in Executive agencies, apply to all Executive agencies, including the Department of Justice; to the Committee on Governmental Affairs.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BURNS:

S. 1223. A bill to protect personal employment information reported to the National Directory of New Hires; to the Committee on Finance.